THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(OR BAPTIST)

MAGAZINE,

ADVOCATING THE

Constitution, Faith, and Practice of the Apostolic Churches.

"ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM."

EPHESIANS IV. 5.

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PREFACE.

In presenting to our readers the Twenty-First Volume of the "Primitive Church Magazine," it behoves us to tender our cordial thanks to those who have so kindly contributed to its pages, as also to all our friends who have aided its circulation.

In the early part of the year, as is well known, Mr. Stokes retired from the post which he had so assiduously occupied for the space of seven years, receiving on his retirement the grateful acknowledgments of the Committee of the Baptist Evangelical Society for the zeal and ability with which he had discharged his official duties. At the urgent request of the same Committee, the present Editors consented to fill, for a time at least, the vacant post. Whether their work thus far has been performed in a satisfactory or efficient manner, it belongs to others to determine. But this we may be allowed to affirm, that our aim has been to make the Magazine the consistent exponent of those principles for the maintenance and diffusion of which it was originated. Such will still be our endeavour.

Without at all instituting invidious comparisons, or attempting to detract in the slightest degree from the value of contemporary religious periodicals, it will, we think, be freely admitted, that the "Primitive Church Magazine" has a sphere of its own—a sphere which other Magazines, pledged, as they are, to "neutrality" on certain points which

we deem of grave importance, cannot possibly occupy. We might on this ground alone appeal to all those who desire to see the "truth as it is in Jesus" clearly and fully stated, and who earnestly long for a return on the part of all Baptists to apostolic doctrine and practice in the constitution and order of our churches, to give us, not their good wishes merely, but also, that which is of much greater value, their active, energetic, and constant support.

The Lord Jehovah hath given a banner to his people, "that it may be displayed because of the truth." Let but the pastors and members in the Baptist churches throughout the kingdom assist us in unfurling this banner, and we have no fear as to the issue. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

We therefore again affectionately urge upon our friends the necessity of *individual* effort in this matter, and as one means of advocating the principles they maintain, let them help us in securing for this Magazine during the coming year such a circulation as it has never yet attained. At the same time we promise that no effort shall be spared on our part to render the Magazine worthy of the support which we bespeak on its behalf.

Thus aided by our brethren and friends, and, above all, enjoying the gracious assistance of Him whom we serve, the labour we have undertaken in the fear of God, and under a solemn sense of responsibility to him, will prove to us a "labour of love."

JOHN HOWE.
EDWARD PARKER.

November 20*th*, 1864.

THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(OR BAPTIST)

MAGAZINE.

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Essays, Expositions, &c.

SECTS AND HERESIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

No. 3. Pelagianism.

"This [freewill, without any antecedent bias] has been so generally received, and so much insisted on by Pelagians, Jesuits, Socinians, Arminians, and others; it may deserve a more full consideration."—*President Edwards.*

In the three former papers on Arianism, and Sabellianism, the leading errors respecting the nature of God, were placed before the reader's attention; but in the present one the error exposed is of a lower order, having to do almost exclusively with man. The Arian and Sabellian alike dishonour the Creator; but the Pelagian falsely honours the creature, by awarding to him a liberty wholly incompatible with his condition of depravity, and by imputing to him a power which sin has ruthlessly taken away. This error strikes at the root of the gospel of mercy, by representing man to possess a liberty, which, were it his prerogative, would render him independent of gospel assistance. If already free he does not need a deliverer, and if morally alive, which free action must necessarily imply, then he requires no one to come as "the way, the truth, and the Life." Such being the dangerous and mischievous character of Pelagianism, every lover of divine truth should understand its nature, in order to resist its approaches whenever a foe so fatal may happen to cross his path.

Pelagius, the founder of this heretical sect, was a native of Britain, and it is credibly stated that his real name was Morgan, and that he went from Wales. He was a man of considerable learning, and, so far as known, of blameless life. The venerable Bede says of him that in

the reign of Arcadius, he "spread far and near the infection of his perfidious doctrine against the assistance of divine grace." It appears that he was at Rome in, or about A.D. 405, and there, in connection with one Cœlestius who, it is probable, went from Ireland, propagated, first in a quiet way, and afterwards more openly, the peculiar sentiments that have given notoriety to his name for above fourteen hundred years. On the approach of the Goths to Rome in A.D. 410, they went first to Sicily, and afterwards to Africa, among whose credulous people they disseminated their views with great boldness and considerable success. Pelagius then departed to Palestine, but his companion remained at Carthage seeking preferment in the church. His errors, however, having become too well known, they were condemned in a council held in Carthage in A.D. 412, on which he too left for the east, much in the character of a religious adventurer, but zealously spreading his poisonous doctrines wherever he went. It was at this period that the celebrated Augustine, bishop or pastor of Hippo, began to controvert these pernicious errors, and to maintain in opposition to them man's indispensable need of divine grace in order to salvation; and the labours of that eminent divine did much to check, though they failed to destroy, the dangerous views of Pelagianism respecting human nature.

Pelagius enjoyed the favour of John, who was chief pastor at Jerusalem, and afterwards that of Zosimus the leading cleric at Rome. But notwithstanding the countenance of these influential pastors, the doctrines of these men were condemned by various councils held for the purpose of examining their nature; and at a general synod held at Ephesus A.D. 431, they received a blow from which they never fully recovered. "In short," says Mosheim, "the Gauls, the Britons, and Africans, by their councils, and the emperors, by their edicts and penal laws, demolished this sect in its infancy, and suppressed it entirely before it had acquired any tolerable degree of vigour or consistence." Upon this statement of the historian it may be remarked, that it is to be regretted that the Church was unequal to its own proper work; and that in the suppression of religious error, it was weak and guilty enough to permit the employment of the civil magistrate and *penal laws* in the noble cause of divine truth. Thus early did the daughter of heaven consent to an alliance that has made her the tool and shame of a carnal policy for the greater part of two thousand years.

The precise tenets of Pelagius it is difficult to discover except on a few essential points. He was frequently ambiguous, and, unless misrepresented, not always candid. The fullest account of them of a recent date is given from Walch in the *Faiths of the World*, vol. ii., where, in a list of twenty-nine different doctrinal articles, the nature and extent of his errors are exhibited with great minuteness. The following are among the chief:—*That men come into the world, in the same state as to power and ability, that Adam did,—that the sin of Adam hurt himself only,—that human nature is not changed by the fall,—that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned,—that Adam's sin is not imputed to his posterity,—that human nature is not depraved in consequence of Adam's sin,—that man is free to sin or not, as he pleases,—that salvation*

depends on the right use of our own powers,—that perfect obedience to the law is possible by men,—that grace changes only the understanding and not the will,—and that salvation consists in leaving off sinning and embracing the doctrines of Christ, and this, with much more, man can do if he will.

It is plain that a system of doctrines such as these, must have originated in human reason alone, and not in revelation in any sense whatever. For it is so evidently opposed to direct scripture statement, and so contradictory to the declared design of the gospel, that no man who revered the Book of God as divine could ever have entertained such erroneous sentiments. Beyond all question, Pelagius formed his scheme from mere reason, and having put it into shape, he then twisted holy scripture to suit his pre-conceived notions. It is not possible to imagine that such a man went to scripture *first* as the light and guide of reason; but on the contrary, he made reason his great teacher, and then laboured to enlist the word of God into the service of that dangerous and defective guide. Among the manifold errors that have cursed the professing church, none have ever more flatly contradicted the word of God than those of Pelagius.

It was necessary to the support of such a mass of error, that scripture should be rendered as obscure as possible by a method of interpretation intended to hide or destroy its true meaning. Hence Pelagius gave no fewer than *six* interpretations to the word "grace." It was—our whole nature but especially freewill,—the promulgation of the law of God,—pardon,—the *example* of Christ,—internal change in our understanding,—and sometimes baptism and final happiness. With Pelagius, grace was all these, but never electing, renewing, or sanctifying grace; never that free act of God's mercy which led the great apostle to exclaim, "By the grace of God, I am what I am!" It was, with the vain and superficial Pelagius the employment of human power according to the freewill of man, and in no sense an act of unmerited mercy on the part of God. Omnipotent man did the work, and God simply looked on and approved!

On a close examination of this system it will be found to resolve itself into the following main particulars:—1st. *A denial of the total depravity of man.* 2nd. *A belief in the absolute freedom of the human will.* 3rd. *A dependence on works as the ground of salvation.* And 4th. *A practical rejection of divine grace as unnecessary.* These, it will be evident are the leading errors of Pelagianism, others being subordinate and secondary; and to the consideration of these as the major principles of the system, the reader's attention will be briefly directed.

That the plain doctrine of Holy Scripture on the corruption of human nature is that of a *total depravity* cannot be questioned, without doing violence to every principle of honest interpretation. On what other ground can we accept the description of the awful wickedness of mankind before the Flood,—or the asserted and unquestioned deceitfulness of the human heart,—or the offering of Christ as a sacrifice for sin,—or the indispensable necessity of the new birth? And is not the testimony equally direct on the great doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his entire posterity? Can this be doubted by any impartial reader of Romans v. 12—21? The argument on this subject,

narrows to the single point of whether the apostle Paul or the rationalizing Pelagius is the more worthy of belief,—whether, in a word, we are to accept the teachings of direct inspiration, or listen to the unsupported opinions of a mere man, who nowhere gives proof of deep thought, or profound piety;—and in so grave a matter there can be, and there ought to be, but one conclusion, which is that where Scripture speaks let Pelagius and every other such man be forgotten.

Besides this, if the subject is viewed in the light of mere philosophy, there can be no other than *total* depravity if there be depravity at all. A partial depravity is an absurdity, since man must either be saint or sinner, holy or corrupt. The unity and simplicity of his moral nature reject the idea of anything partial in his spiritual being. He is in himself a totality, and can never be divided into separate parts; whatever therefore affects his spiritual character affects him wholly and totally. Hence human depravity must of necessity be complete; and if it appears less so in some individuals than in others, this is explained by the presence of restraining influences which hold in check the depravity that has made us all "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It is very questionable whether, apart from such influences, there remains a stand point between God and Devil. Had not man been *totally* depraved there never could have been a cannibal upon earth. That hideous type of our common humanity proclaims to the universe the corruptibility of our nature *when left to itself*.

As a consequence free-will, as taught by Pelagius, and a number of others, is an impossibility and a contradiction. An impossibility, because if the depravity be *total* it must of necessity include the will as a part of the depraved man; and a contradiction by assuming that the man is evil, but his will is good. According to this shallow theory the man may go one way, but the will another:—the one tending towards sin, but the other towards holiness;—the one inclining to evil, but the other inclining to good. And this "house divided against itself" is *the man* of Pelagianism, and in this particular, of its counterpart in Arminianism also. This system of contradictions, moreover, is held to be necessary to human responsibility, as if responsibility had to do with the will only and not with the *whole man*. Responsibility has to do with *man*, of whom the will is but a part; and the sinfulness of man, including that of his will, can never avail to release him from moral obligation. Whether upright or fallen, whether saint or sinner, man is amenable to his Maker; and the fact of his depravity can never make the slightest difference in his accountability to Him who is "over all, God blessed for ever." If therefore the freedom of the human will is demanded as a necessary condition of moral responsibility, it is granted at once, and without hesitation; but if, in consequence of this concession, or on any other ground, it is pleaded that this freewill can ever be enlisted on the side of God and goodness apart from the Holy Spirit's grace, this we utterly deny as opposed to Scripture statement in the first instance, and to sound philosophy in the next. The freedom of the will is necessary to responsibility; but the freedom of that will in *depraved* man, is a freedom for evil and not for good, and it is an unspeakable mercy that the infinitely wise and holy God, holds that most corrupt and wicked will in check. But for this merciful

interposition the depraved freewill of fallen man would make the world a Gehenna of death, a dwelling-place of fiends. Consequently, the first act of sovereign mercy towards the saved is to "make them *willing* in the day of his power;" and this most gracious process in the human heart confirms beyond all doubt or cavilling, the truth of the Redeemer's words, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me, draw him."

Hence it follows that salvation is not and can never be, of works, as Pelagius asserted, but must be of grace, of pure free grace. As a "gift," to which none have claim, it is a sovereign act, and according to plan and purpose irrespective of merit in the creature, since none can exist in a creature wholly corrupt. Consequently, viewed in whatever light, Pelagianism is a delusion and a snare. Indulging in contradictions,—opposing holy Scripture with cool audacity and empty pride,—imputing to fallen creatures a liberty which, if possessed, would be both dangerous and defiant,—and discarding the aid of divine grace, on the ground of prior ability without it; Pelagianism comes before us, as the offspring of pride and self-sufficiency, and the determined foe of that free grace in Christ, which gives to the believing sinner all his hope, and to the ever-blessed God all his glory, as the Saviour of his chosen people.

None, however, who study this system can question its seductive influence. It is gratifying to corrupt man to be told that he is free and not a slave; and in nothing is fidelity put to a severer test than in withholding this gratification from human pride. Even the Saviour's life was endangered by denying this freedom to the Jews in the bold and faithful assertion, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant [doulos, *slave*] of sin." (John viii. 34) Pelagianism is, consequently, most congenial to our corrupt nature by flattering our pride, and contributing to our vanity. Proclaiming a freedom which, as sinners, we have forfeited, and a liberty which Divine grace alone can restore; its approaches resemble those of the character in the book of Proverbs (chap. vii.) of whom it is said, that, "*she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*"

W. S.

PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH.

No. 1.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 7.

THE opinions of celebrated men who rank among sound divines, are very diverse on the subject of Paul's thorn in the flesh. In a second paper several of these opinions will be given with appropriate remarks. For the present, the following cautious letter is given. It was written by Mr. Stephens to H. Moore, on the 29th of December, 1814, and is none the less worthy of a careful perusal on account of age.

"St. Paul's infirmity was one well known in hot climates—a chronical ophthalmia. Hence he was what is called *blear-eyed*, and was often, perhaps, obliged to wear a shade. It made his personal presence mean; it was a visible infirmity in his flesh; it hindered his usefulness, and therefore he besought the Lord anxiously that it might depart from him, but was answered, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' It made it, for the most part, painful and difficult for him to write. Hence he generally employed an amanuensis, and regarded it as a great matter when he used his own pen. 'You see how large a letter I have written to you with mine own hand.' 'The salutation of me, Paul, written with my own hand.' It is thought that he might abstain from writing to save his strength or time;—why then did he work at tent-making? A man who maintained himself by that sedentary labour might as well have been at his desk, for we cannot suppose that the wages of a journeyman tent-maker were greater than those of an amanuensis. It exposed him to contempt and derision among strangers, and therefore he gives praise to the Galatians, that when he preached the Gospel to them at the first, through infirmity of the flesh, his temptation which was in 'his flesh, they despised not.' That the infirmity was of a bodily kind, seems quite indisputable. Doddridge, and all the best commentators take that side. It is literally so described; and the calling it a 'messenger of Satan' is perfectly consistent with its being a bodily disease. Satan, in fifty places, is represented as the immediate author of corporal defects and maladies. The passages cited show it was something visible to others. How could a temptation to a particular sin be so, unless it was complied with? It would be derogatory to the character of the Apostle, and even of an antinomian tendency, to suppose this to have been the case. The Galatians *ought* to have despised him, if, in preaching the Gospel, he had exhibited before them the strength of a temptation by the commission of open sin. They would have deserved no praise for not despising, but the reverse; *i.e.* for not despising the temptation, if put for the visible sin, which was its evidence. In short, I am astonished how any pious and judicious commentator should think this 'thorn in the flesh' a thorn in the conscience. If it was bodily, it was also some bodily infirmity of an unsightly appearance, making his 'person' or aspect 'mean,' and exposing him to contempt. How shall we find a more probable hypothesis to suit those and the other preconceptions? He was not lame,—witness his great bodily activity.

"Doddridge suppposes that the view he had of celestial glories might have affected his nervous system so as to occasion stammering in his speech, or some ridiculous distortion in his countenance. (Exposition. 2 Corinthians xii. 7) But it is at least equally probable that those heavenly visions, or the supernatural light which blinded him at his conversion, might have left a weakness and disease in the organs immediately affected. It is notorious that after a severe inflammation in the eyes, they are extremely liable, for a long time, or through life, to a return of the complaint. It may be even presumed from analogy, that unless the miracle which restored Paul to sight, removed also a natural secondary effect of the temporary injury the organs had received, there must have been a predisposition afterwards

to the complaint which I suppose him to have had. Now that frugality in the use of means, which has been observed even in the miraculous works of God, may be supposed to have permitted that predisposition to remain, it being designed that the Apostle, for his humiliation and the exercise of his faith and patience, should have a permanent infirmity of the flesh to struggle with in future life.

"The choice of the metaphor by which St. Paul describes his infirmity also weighs much with me; indeed it first excited my conjecture. The pain of ophthalmia, when severe, exactly resembles the prick of a thorn or pin. I once had it severely indeed in the West Indies. It made me blind, in a manner, for about three weeks, and during that time if a ray of light by any means broke into my darkened chamber, it was like a thorn or pin run into my eye, and so I often described it. I felt also the subsequent effect for years, which I supposed to have been experienced by St. Paul; a predisposition to inflammation in the eyes, which extreme care and timely applications prevented from recurring. I see a further possible source of this idea in his mind, in the fact that thorns in the eyes are figuratively used in different parts of the Scripture, to signify troubles and temptations. (See Numbers xxxiii. 55, and Joshua xxiii. 13) Now if this metaphor had an affinity with the actual bodily sensations of the Apostle, it was natural he should think of and use it, but as natural that he should vary it into the more general term flesh, that he might not confound the proper with the metaphorical sense, and be understood to mean that a thorn actually thrust into his eye had produced the disease.

"This may be thought, perhaps, too refined: but the strongest argument of all remains, and appears to me nearly, if not quite, decisive: it rests upon Galatians iv. 15. After praising them in the preceding verse, for not despising his fleshly infirmity (whatever that was), he here subjoins, 'I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.' How natural this context on my hypothesis! How little so on any other! Was it a moral infirmity, a temptation shown by its fruits? It might, then, have pardon; it might have charitable and respectful indulgence, in consideration of the great and good qualities which were seen in the same character; but it could not give rise to such glowing affection, such ardour of sympathetic kindness, as these words import. Again, was it a bodily infirmity affecting some other member than the eye; how extremely unnatural this expression of the sympathy which it produced. Let us take, for instance, Doddridge's conjecture. 'You saw my paralytic distortions in my mouth and cheeks, you heard my stammering tongue, when I first preached the Gospel to you; but you despised not those infirmities. On the contrary, you would, if it had been possible, have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.' Suppose lameness, or some sharp internal disease, (as others have supposed, notwithstanding the visible character of the infirmity,) and the incongruity is not much, if at all, less. But if the Apostle was speaking of his diseased eyes, which made his aspect unsightly, and prevented, perhaps, much of the natural effect of his preaching, to which they, nevertheless, respectfully listened, and with affectionate sympathy did all they could for his comfort and relief,—how natural,

how appropriate this grateful close of the encomium. Such was your generous and tender sympathy, that I verily believe, if you could have removed those sufferings of mine, and that obstacle to my more perfect usefulness, by taking the infirmity in my stead, by plucking out your own sound eyes, and transferring them to my use, you would have been willing to do so."

SAINTS PRESENTED FAULTLESS.

(Continued from December, 1863.)

How clearly does it then appear that the highest measure of spiritual joy of which we read in Scripture arose from manifestations of God to his people—thence sprung their highest happiness and greatest strength; the clearer and fuller their views of God, the more blessed were they. Yet the clearest views of God in this world have been in a manner dimmed through the weakness and darkness of our nature. And, moreover, the clearest manifestations of the glory of the Lord, have been by means of temples, visions, dreams, and sacred ordinances through which God was pleased to make himself known. But those means which were necessary to keep off and soften the too bright effulgence of the glory of the Lord will hereafter be laid aside: there will be no temple, no cloud, no veil. Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now we know in part; then shall we know even as also we are known.

What true and solid ground have you, then, to hope that your meeting with the Lord will be unspeakably delightful? After a long absence; after much earnest desire and joyful expectation; after striving and waiting and suffering, very great must be your triumph and your joy when He comes the second time. Happy shall they be who shall see this and be honoured to participate in its most blessed fulness. But now, beloved, as Jude saith, "Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should be mockers in the last times, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life."

And surely, ardent love and gratitude and praise, are due to God from us, for this well-founded and most blessed hope. The words of this apostle here are most significant and full: "To the only wise God our Saviour," he says, "be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Now, if, in the general scheme of the gospel salvation, God hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, how can we but adore his wisdom and his care in the particular mercy of keeping us from falling and bringing us into his everlasting kingdom? How did He keep Lot in Sodom; who, so far from being led astray by the errors of the wicked, was vexed from day to day by their unlawful deeds! And when the children of Israel

killed the prophets, digged down the altars of God, and Elijah alone was left a prophet of the Lord, and they sought his life, what said the answer of God?—"I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal, or kissed his image." And when, through the great apostacy of the latter days, the enemy came in like a flood, "the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him." (Revelations vii.) Of the happy number thus redeemed from the earth you have the following description; and as it extends to the faithful of our own day, it applies to you also. "These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelations xiv)

Finally, brethren, rejoice in the Lord. You have the highest reason, in relation to your hope in God, for gratitude and praise. The wisdom and the power by which all things were formed, the love that changes not, are engaged to keep your souls from falling. The great Shepherd of the sheep, who gave his life for you, and who has led you through the wilderness and fed you in green pastures, will at length conduct you to the paradise of God. To him, then, be all glory, all honour, all praise.

And how do you now pray, and long to see his name exalted in the earth; and his laws received and honoured in the church! Are not all the talents, the energies, and riches of the church, the gift of God? And ought they not to be all converted to his service, "whose you are, and whom you serve?" And as you joyfully look for the life and incorruption brought to light by the gospel, and have, through grace, a solid elevating hope of everlasting glory, it is meet and reasonable that you even now rejoice. The confident expectation of the never ending happiness of the sons of God ought to fill your hearts, like the hearts of the first disciples, with triumphant exultation. To expect an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and then hang down your head and cry Woe is me, would be exceedingly unworthy of your high vocation. I know your entire and deep dependence on the grace and operation of the Holy Spirit. But this grace is promised; and it will be graciously imparted. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and in his Father's glory, and all the holy angels with him, He will openly confess his saints and clothe them with immortality and honour. And then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

A. MACLEOD.

SLAVERY STILL.—At their last auction sale, Messrs. Pannill and Son offered several negroes, three of whom brought the following excellent prices:—Jane, ten years of age, 3,100 dollars, equal to about £625 of our money; John Smith, 17 years of age, 3,450 dollars; John ——, 19 years of age, 3,905 dollars. The recent sales of negroes in this city evince the fact that the people have the most unbounded confidence in the success of our cause. Prices continue to advance slowly and steadily, and where a good hand of either sex is put up at auction, the bidding is always spirited.—*Petersburg Express, Southern States.*

Page for the Young.

THE WORLD'S CONVERSION TO GOD IN CHRIST.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—The subject on which several of you wrote to me is a very important one, and it is one for which we should constantly pray and labour. For this world is not to be for ever under the control of Satan, to deceive and destroy the souls of men. This you have shown from Psalm xxii. 27, "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.*" And the same glorious truth is taught in Psalms lxvi 4, lxvii. 7, lxxii. 17, and cxiii. 3. The glowing prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel abound with similar representations. Isaiah (xi. 9) says, "*The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea;*" and Daniel (vii. 27) speaking of the great King, Christ the Lord, says, "*Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*" And then we read the words of the angel to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, (Luke ii, 10) "I bring you good tidings of great joy, *which shall be to all people.*" The beloved apostle also, in his banishment, was favoured with the visions of the future and heard (Revelations xi. 15) "Great voices in heaven saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*" And afterwards (xx. 3) he saw an angel seize the Devil and Satan, then cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up "*that he should deceive the nations no more,*" until that predicted period of "a thousand years" should be fulfilled. Whether that prophetic period be *literally* a thousand years, perhaps no uninspired person can say; but whether that or more, during the whole period the world will not be deceived by Satan, but the spirit of falsehood will be withdrawn from all the earth.

What a glorious assurance these and other passages of Scripture give us, that this world of our's shall yet become Christ's world; and that kings shall become the nursing fathers and their queens the nursing mothers of his church. What then should we all be doing—the old and young—the rich and poor—parents and children? Look at Isaiah lxii. 6 and 7, and then give me an answer. THE EDITOR.

A TRUE CHRISTIAN.

At Lambeth-street Police Office, a coalwhipper was charged with a violent assault on a fellow-workman, by knocking off a part of his nose. The poor sufferer would not press the charge, as the prisoner was a hard-working man with a large family. "What," said the magistrate, "not punish him after that savage assault?" "No, your worship," replied the noble-hearted fellow, "I don't want to hurt him." The magistrate praised the man for his Christian spirit, but said, that at least he must have some compensation. "Please your worship," replied the poor man, "he has a large family, and if you will forgive him, I shall sleep all the better."

Useful Questions.

PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH.

An enquirer asks, Was Paul in danger of exalting himself, or was he in danger of being exalted by others, that "a thorn in the flesh was given to him?" 2 Corinthians xii. 7.

Professor Robinson says, the word [uperairomai] is used in the New Testament only in the middle voice. The same word is used in 2 Thessalonians ii. 4, where, I suppose, every enlightened Protestant understands the Pope to be intended, and that in his case it is self exaltation.

CHRISTIANS AT CONCERTS.

Will any of the readers of the "*Primitive*" oblige an enquirer by giving their views on Christians attending Concerts. Is it right? Are they likely to "grow in grace" by going there? Is it "redeeming the time?" Do Concerts properly belong to the Church or the world?

FAMILY PRAYER.

Argus asks, Can that be called a *Christian* family where family prayer is habitually neglected? (Genesis xviii. 19.)

Correspondence.

CHINA.

To the Rev. W. Stokes, Manchester.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—Though not personally acquainted yet doubtless you have heard my name as a Baptist Missionary in China. I have just seen your name in one of my papers in connection with a Strict Communion Baptist move in England. This seems to be a late move tending to concentrate the strength and labours of that class of Baptists in England.

As a strict Communion Baptist I am glad to see such a move in England. We are generally so from the United States of America; and I should be glad that we could be unitedly so in China. The object of this communication is, if possible, to interest you and your strict communion brethren in the China mission, as a suitable field for your first and most energetic foreign effort. The other Baptist brethren of England have occupied India, where they have a good foothold; but they have done little or nothing in China. They had one or two missionaries about Shanghae; but Brother Hall, the principal one, died, and I am not sure that they have one left now. This field seems just to have been left open by your open communion brethren as if on purpose that you, who are strict communionist, might occupy it. And then all the Baptists in China, whether from England or America, may commune together when we meet. This feels to me desirable. And what other field for missionary work can you

find so open, so large, and so needy as China?

I have been here twenty-six years, and of course must shortly resign my work to other hands, according to the course of nature. I have a constituted Baptist Church here in Canton, and two Chapels, where I have preaching every Sunday; but not being connected with any Board, I have no one prepared to succeed me in my work when I am done. I have been feeling around among the Boards of my native country where I should find a successor; but this civil war prevents any prospect of such from that quarter. Now, would it not be as well to bring this subject before your people in that way which you may think most advisable—I mean the subject of the China Mission—and from the facilities I might be able to afford such a commencement, might it not be well to join me at Canton, and also at Nanking, should that place be re-taken by the Imperialists, as we expect? I have a chapel of my own both here and also one there, and could, doubtless, afford much beginning aid to missionaries from your community. I should be glad to welcome such as are inclined by your appointment to come and see. China is a great field, and must be cultivated; and when the fruit begins to come in in good earnest, converts may be expected to multiply like the dew drops of the morning. Nor are we now without fruit; but not in such rich abundance as we look for it hereafter. There are two Baptist churches in this place, which together, perhaps, have a hundred members—and more coming—several inquirers on hand. I have baptised six members this year—five at one time—which was encouraging. Still these encouragements are only such as to enable us to exercise the more patience and perseverance,—"We shall reap in due time, if we faint not." I hope you will bring this subject before your brethren in their associated capacity in some shape—I mean the China mission in general—that they may have the opportunity of taking it under serious consideration. And I can but earnestly hope that they will adopt China as their first and most prominent foreign mission field, and allow their first missionary or missionaries at least to visit me at Canton, and enjoy an option of joining me or not at their own pleasure. We have a wide field here yet unoccupied by any one. Even Canton itself calls for a much closer cultivation; and as to the country around, it is almost a desert yet, so far as relates to gospel cultivation!

But the night of darkness and discouragement has passed away in China—the day now dawneth; and now our opportunities and encouragements to labour among this people are more abundant than are likely to be soon improved, unless the Churches in Christendom exert themselves with a new degree of zeal and energy. If undertaken, I trust the very greatness of the work would stimulate your people with a new degree of energy. In fact, some great work like the China mission, is the best stimulus to infuse energy and zeal, prayer and a laborious spirit into a people like your's, newly beginning on their own responsibility—on their own hook—as we say in America. And when once stimulated properly, you need not fear as to smaller matters and home affairs—they will progress equally

as well—"They that water shall be watered themselves." None the less will be done at home and for minor missions, because you may do much in China, but rather the more! You hardly know your strength until you try it.

May I ask the favour to hear from you in due time, whether anything can be done in this matter? And should I be able to serve you here by further information, or in any other way, I shall be most happy to do so. Command my service at pleasure in the mission line.

Yours most respectfully,

J. J. ROBERTS.

Canton, October 12th, 1863.

[*Strict Baptists!* Is not this letter a call on your Christian zeal and activity, and should it not be regarded, in the order of Divine Providence, as a parallel case with that of Paul (Acts xvi. 9–10) and the man of Macedonia who prayed, "Come over and help us?" We so regard it; since it has not been sought for but has come to us spontaneously, but verily not by human accident or mere chance. And how should the Strict Baptists treat this fervent appeal? As one man they should say with faithful Caleb, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Will our friends favour us with their thoughts upon this important subject, *and the earlier the better*—ED. OF P.C.M.]

THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

MY DEAR SIR,—The constant and increasing opposition of Puseyite clergymen and others, to Baptists and Baptist principles, in many parts of the country, but especially among the poor, requires to be met by the free circulation of scriptural truth. The publications of the Baptist Tract Society are well adapted for this purpose, and hence, numerous appeals have, year after year, been made to the Committee, for free grants for distribution. By this means many have been enlightened upon the ordinance of Baptism, as taught in the New Testament. The Committee have never refused an application for grants until the present year, but they are obliged to do so at present, as the funds are exhausted.

Very many urgent appeals are now before your committee, which they are anxious to assist, and they have, therefore, been compelled to make an especial appeal for increased subscriptions and donations.

One hundred pounds are required immediately, to supply present wants, and remove the debts,—and an increase in subscriptions, of from thirty to fifty pounds per annum, that the spheres of usefulness continually opening may be occupied.

In the hope that this may be accomplished, the Committee have engaged the services of Mr. Adam Whitehead, a member of the Baptist church, at Ogden, in Lancashire, to visit the churches and friends in the North, and by personal application, endeavour to obtain collections, subscriptions, and donations for the society.

As the principles and usefulness of the society are generally known to our ministerial brethren in the denomination, it is hoped, and earnestly requested that they will kindly render any assistance in their power to Mr. Whitehead, when he visits the neighbourhood in which they reside.

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Those applications for grants that are standing over, will be attended to as soon as the Committee are supplied with funds.

If, Mr. Editor, you will kindly assist the society, by inserting this letter in your Magazine for January, about which time it is expected Mr. Whitehead will commence his engagement, it will much oblige the Committee, and

Yours, very sincerely,
E. J. OLIVER, Treasurer.

2, *Chatham Place, Walworth Road.*
December 9th, 1863.

[We have very great pleasure in recommending this appeal to the liberality of our readers, and sincerely hope that Mr. Whitehead may be greatly encouraged in this important mission.—ED.]

Poetry.

THE HAPPY FUTURE.

(From Pollock's Course of Time.)

The animals, as once in Eden, lived
In peace. The wolf dwelt with the lamb, the bear
And leopard with the fox. With looks of love,
The tiger and the scaly crocodile
Together met, at Gambia's palmy wave.
Perched on the eagle's wing, the bird of song,
Singing, arose, and visited the sun;
And with the falcon sat the gentle lark.
The little child leaped from his mother's arms,
And stroked the crested snake, and rolled unhurt
Among his speckled waves, and wished him home;
And sauntering school-boys, slow returning, played
At eve about the lion's den, and wove,
Into his shaggy mane, fantastic flowers.
To meet the husbandman, early abroad,
Hasted the deer, and waved its woody head;
And round his dewy steps, the hare unscared,
Sported; and toyed familiar with his dog.
The flocks and herds, o'er hill and valley spread,
Exulting, cropped the ever-budding herb.
The desert blossomed, and the barren sung.
Justice and Mercy, Holiness and Love,
Among the people walked; Messiah reigned,
And earth kept Jubilee a thousand years.

Reviews.

THE ECLECTIC REVIEW, for 1863. London: Jackson, Walford and Co., 27, Paternoster Row.

Most of our readers, we presume, are aware that the *Eclectic* was commenced in the year 1805, and that as a consequence, it takes rank among those publications that owe their existence to the zeal and piety of a past generation. "At its commencement," says Mr. Ryland, in his life of John Foster, "churchmen and dissenters were united in its support, on the understanding that the points at issue between them were not to be brought under discussion. It soon, however, became evident that a neutrality

which would exclude from animadversion, not only the abstract question of religious establishments, but all abuses, past and present, which might attach to our social institutions, would narrow the freedom of discussion to a degree, that, in a nation as practical as ours, would deprive the Review of all interest to persons holding decided opinions. Against this equivocal and undignified position which even then, and still more in later years, would be so unsatisfactory to earnest minds, Mr. Foster made frequent and pointed remonstrances, which, combined with the tone of several of his articles, contributed to a settlement of the Journal on a Nonconformist basis." p. 311.

This "settlement" of the foundation on which the superstructure should be built, gave to the *Eclectic* at its commencement a freshness, a distinctness, and a freedom, which, while honourable to its projectors and supporters, were the means of securing its early success. Its mission was thus defined by a manly boldness tempered with charity, which its leading contributors studied to maintain. Hence those noble papers by Robert Hall, on "Zeal without Innovation," and on Gisborne's Sermons; that also on Foster's Essays; and others by cotemporary hands, possessing powers scarcely, if at all inferior to those of that celebrated writer. There are disquisitions on numerous topics of great interest and importance, in the first ten volumes of this Review, which fifty years of subsequent improvement have not excelled. For profundity of thought, clearness of expression, and comprehensiveness of view, they even now, keep their place among the first productions of the periodical press.

But has the *Eclectic* maintained its character? This question is too important to admit of a hasty reply, nor should *any* reply be attempted without a careful examination of its recent issues, and a candid allowance for such changes as upwards of half a century has unavoidably introduced. Whoever presumes on a premature answer, is fairly open to the charge of prejudice, ignorance, or partiality.

We have carefully watched the course of the *Eclectic* for the last few years,—have read its articles with attention,—and done our best to determine how far it is faithful to its early profession of being a "journal on a Nonconformist basis." For inferior matters we care very little; but we are seriously concerned about a Journal that is the avowed exponent of Nonconformist principles, and which was intended to be the *literary* organ of those conscientious men who are not believers in the popular but empty cry of, "Church and State."

Then comes the question; how far has the *Eclectic* kept steadily in view its early intention? To what extent has it proved itself to be the faithful expression of Nonconformist opinions? We approach the enquiry with due caution, and proceed with candour to furnish a reply.

That the *Eclectic* has been *respectably* conducted, no one of its readers can question; but *respectability* is only one quality among many in the management of such a periodical. If power, and above all if Nonconformist *principle* are wanting, or but defectively supplied, mere respectability will do but little for the avowed object of the work. Above all other elements that of dogged, straight-forward, and even old fashioned principle is required, to give weight and influ-

ence to any organ that assumes to represent the Nonconformist body. Has the *Eclectic*, in recent years, supplied this principle? In other words, can we place this journal on our table with a full and safe conviction that our children will learn from its pages the immortal principles for which our forefathers suffered, bled, and died?

To answer this grave question to some extent, let a careful reader examine the leading articles of the *Eclectic* for 1863. They are the following: *Christopher North*,—*The Jewish Church*,—*St. Bernard*,—*Kinglake's Invasion of the Crimea*,—*John Leifchild*,—*James Sherman*,—*A Modern Quaker Apostle*,—*Legge, of Leicester*,—*Ulrich Von Hutten*,—*An old Eclectic Reviewer*,—*Jeremy Taylor*,—and *Dante*. But from which of these could any young Nonconformist learn the nature of those principles which have induced his father to take sides with Dissenters; and to cut himself off from the more "respectable" worshippers at the Established Church? We are deeply concerned about these matters, and cannot allow a journal to escape merited censure when it fails to fulfil its openly avowed mission. It signifies just nothing that it does something else; it has a Nonconformist duty to discharge, and surely it is not too much to expect that in a whole year's work, there should be some *direct* proof that it has not been "a dumb dog that cannot bark."

We cheerfully award to this periodical the merit of industry, *smartness*, and a fair amount of general reading; but we miss the gravity, adherence to principle, and impressiveness of former years. The spirit of levity, or of common-place remark, has nearly superseded the profound criticism and manly discrimination of the past, and in lieu of solid scholarship we are too frequently treated to the *clever* superficialities of *dilettanti* professors of the reviewing art. "Light reading" we can have any day in "Cornhill" and "Temple Bar,"—but we have a right to expect something more weighty in the pages of the *Eclectic*. Shall we have this in the forthcoming *Eclectic and Congregational Review*? If so, we shall not again be annoyed by an implied censure upon modern ministers, who happen to be "fevered with anxiety about conversions." (*August No.* p. 90.) Surely the writer might never have heard of a Baxter and a John Howe;—of "The call to the unconverted," and "The Redeemer's Tears over lost souls." If the *Eclectic* requires to be reminded that "conversions" are at once the proof and reward of ministerial earnestness and fidelity,—it has sadly missed or forgotten its early mission. For our own part we fervently pray that this "fevered anxiety" may warm every Nonconformist pulpit under the sun. Its absence would transform the preacher into a statue, and his hearers into idle formalists; but its presence would go far to renew the scenes of that favoured period when "*the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved.*"

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION. Circular issued by the Committee.

Nothing can be more appropriate, or more timely, than this union, for the purpose of a more successful co-operation among *Strict* Baptist Sunday Schools. Having attempted something like it ourselves, among the churches, we

rejoice to see a similar movement among the schools; and we thus publicly tender our thanks to the Committee in general, and to Mr. Hawkins, in particular, (the originator we believe,) for this judicious effort to unite a comparatively scattered body.

For what are the facts of the case but these? Here are the *open* men, united as a Macedonian phalanx, and compact as completeness itself can desire, ready for attack, defence, or combined retreat, as circumstances may dictate. Their Magazines from the *Baptist* down to the *Church*, work and teach to one uniform purpose, that of open-communionism; and their societies from the *Baptist Mission*, the *Home Mission*, &c., to the *Young Men's Association*, partake of the same general inspiration; and their academies or colleges, from Bristol, to Regent's Park, and Rawdon, bear with certainty in the same general direction. Not that this in every instance is *intended*, for we are fully aware that in many cases there are *no questions asked* upon the communion subject, and so far the institutions are not to blame. But notwithstanding this abstract impartiality yet the *tendency*, to all intents and purposes is the same; and like adventurers in the stream who intended to swim in one direction, but who find out when too late, that they are carried to the opposite point by the sheer force of the current, so, in very many instances ministerial candidates and others, are borne away from early conviction by influences too abundantly supplied by these popular combinations. They bravely purposed ascending the river, but before they well know where they are, they are carried off their feet into the "open" sea.

And what are the facts on the other side, namely, that of *strict* Baptists, but these? Here are some two hundred churches, or more, with no acknowledged bond of union. With three or four Magazines, (the *Gospel Herald*, the *Primitive Church*, the *Voice of Truth*, and, in some sense, the *Earthen Vessel*,) frequently in each other's way, and scarcely one of them able to *go alone*, yet are they as far from concerted action, as if they inhabited different planets. They have no "school of the prophets," for the improvement of young men whom God has called by his Holy Spirit to the work of the ministry, with the solitary and humble exception of the domestic establishment of the Baptist Evangelical Society. They have no organized mode of missionary action, and while they frequently find fault with the "open" tendencies of the *Baptist Mission*, yet, in this department of labour they do next to nothing themselves. Nor have they anything like systematic arrangement even for their own defence, notwithstanding the significant warnings they have received from Norwich, and Ramsgate, of what the "charity" of open-communionism will do if allowed to indulge its own voracity. What the recently formed *Strict Communion Baptist Society* may accomplish, remains to be seen; but should it fail, it will fail from the very cause of which we now complain, namely, the want of hearty union among *Strict* Baptists. Yet they possess both in their numbers and their principles sufficient power for every denominational purpose; the deeper should be our regret therefore, that a people who, if united, might take a foremost rank among religious bodies,

for the want of that union resemble but "a rope of sand." Verily, "*The children of this world, are wiser in their generation, than the children of light.*"

Consequently, we rejoice in the formation of this "Baptist Sunday School Union," and pray that it may have a long and a prosperous career. None the less do we wish this because it was once in our mind to propose the formation of such an institute. A division of labour, especially where the workers' hands are already more than full, is wise and profitable, and deserves all possible encouragement. We moreover congratulate the Union on having secured the co-operation of such brethren as Messrs. John Foreman, S. Milner, W. Palmer, J. Briscoe, G. T. Congreve, J. C. Kemp, E. Mote, G. Pearson, and others. These names will give weight and influence to the Union, and their united prayers, will, we earnestly hope, bring down upon it that which is of far more value than human names can be, the blessing of Jehovah, the Triune God of the Church.

BRIEF NOTICES.

The Original Baptist Almanack, for 1864. Thirteenth year of publication. London: G. J. Stevenson, 54, Paternoster Row. This little work, always useful, and full of important matter, improves with age. The present issue is most valuable, and the information it contains is not equalled, especially to Baptists, by any two-penny annual of the period. It reflects great credit upon its enterprising authors, and deserves general support.

The Baptist Hand-Book, for 1864. London: J. Heaton and Son, 42, Paternoster Row. This Hand-Book of 148 pages, and three times the price of the foregoing publication, may be regarded as the denominational standard. Its information is full and remarkably well arranged, and the greatest pains possible have been taken to secure accuracy. This Manual has vastly improved since it came into the hands of the Messrs. Heaton.

Celestial Paradise, being a funeral sermon for Mrs. Kerley, preached by Mr. John Pells, at Soho Chapel, London. Funeral sermons are not often so appropriate and affectionate as this. It must have been as balm to the wounded heart of the bereaved; and it must equally have done honour to the occasion and preacher.

Old Jonathan, for November and December. Two excellent numbers of a monthly, which for useful matter, clear printing, and beautiful illustrations, has no equal in the land at the price of one penny. It is a perfect marvel of cheapness, and we hope to hear some day or other that its circulation has reached one million of copies.

Thoughts on Baptism, &c. Second part. By Thomas Edwards, 38 pp. We can understand the "Friends," — commonly called Quakers,—in their view of the complete spirituality of the gospel dispensation, and their consequent rejection of both baptism and the Lord's supper. They are at least entitled to the claim of *consistency*, how partial soever may be their reasoning. But this author we do not understand, and we very much question if he understands himself. He refers us to 1 Cor. xii. 13, as a justification of the rejection of *water* baptism. What then will he make of the same epistle,

chap. i. 13, 14, 15, 16 v.? Will he be so weak or worse, as to charge upon Paul, that he rejected in one place, what he practised in another? Will he say that an inspired apostle contradicted himself? Yet he means this or his futile and childish reasoning falls to the ground. In truth, the pamphlet is one of the weakest and most inconclusive things that ever went to press, and we should pity any poor people who had no better guide than the writer of these rambling pages.

Thoughts of Heaven. By John Foreman. London: Paul, Chapter House Court, St. Paul's. No one can read this excellent tract of thirty-two pages, without deep interest. It is worthy of the name it bears.

The Garden Oracle, for 1864. London: Groombridge and Sons, Paternoster Row. A most useful book for those who love a good flower garden.

The Practical consequences of Teaching any future Restoration of the Race, is a tract published by Houlston and Co., whose chief utility will be found in the direction of a closer attachment to the Bible as it is.

Missionary Scenes. Baptist Missionary Society. These consist of a series of ten cards, with a variety of engravings, portraits, &c., connected with the Baptist Mission. Certainly we have seen nothing so beautifully executed as these cards, and the information is as valuable as the engravings are beautiful. Among the rewards of Sunday Schools these must take a very high place. They do the publisher, Mr. E. Stock, the highest possible credit.

Pearls from the Golden Streams. London: Houlston and Co. This is a charming little book for the young, and should be distributed widely among them. It is full of the Cross, and ever points to Calvary.

Intelligence.

DENMARK.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—My last report was dated September 16th. I have now the pleasure of furnishing you with a brief account of my labours since that time.

Lord's Day, 20th, and Monday, 21st of September, I was at Veile, and preached there. Having long promised to come to the north of Jutland, I set out for that part of the country Thursday, Sept. 24th. I reached Aalborg on Saturday, the 26th, early in the morning. That day I met with some of the elder brethren for business.

Lord's Day, 27th. Preached twice at Aalborg in a large dancing hall, which was hired for the purpose. A great number of people assembled, particularly in the afternoon. All very quiet and attentive; and many seemed deeply moved by listening to the glad tidings of salvation through faith in the blessed Saviour. After the public meeting, we sat down to the Lord's table. I trust the Lord was present with his rich blessing.

From Aalborg I went into the country several miles to the south;

remained there nearly a week, and preached in various places. From thence I went to the east—to Hals and neighbourhood. From Hals to Sœby and Frederickshavn, and various villages near these towns; then to Hjörring, to Saltum and Jetzmark parishes; then to Aalborg, and from thence to Veile.

The Methodists who some years since settled in this country, put forth great energy to promulgate the gospel according to their views. They have now sent an agent to Aalborg, where they have hired a large room for preaching. He was present at our meetings. Our brethren told me he is a friendly and pleasant man.

At a place called Nörre Kongerslev, about ten miles south of Aalborg, a rich farmer, who has built a fine new house, allowed us the use of his rooms, and I had the pleasure to preach to a large congregation.

At Guddum, a place not far from the former, a woman of ninety-one years of age, was present, and listened to the sound of salvation through faith in Christ even for old sinners. After the meeting, I conversed with her,—and she appeared not to be insensible of her condition as a sinner, and her need of the Saviour.

At Hals, a town nearly twenty miles east of Aalborg, at the mouth of the Lümfjord, (firth of Lüm) I preached four or five times, and most of the meetings were crowded, though the weather was unfavourable and the roads bad. The people are most of them rather rough, and some years ago they used sometimes to handle our brethren rather roughly I preached there for the first time about fourteen years ago. They seemed to take a fancy to me, and whenever I have been there great numbers have come to the meetings. It is rather remarkable, for I have always fearlessly and candidly, yet kindly told them the truth about their condition as sinners, and their need of a Saviour. But just such a Saviour as they needed, was proclaimed to them through the gospel. He was ready to receive sinners such as they.

About ten miles to the west of Hals is a large village called Wester Hassing. We have never had any meeting there before. We succeeded in getting a room at a rich farmer's, and I was permitted to preach to a crowded assembly. The sound of the gospel, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, of salvation to the chief of sinners through faith in the blessed Saviour, were rather new and strange to them. However, they listened with great attention; and many, I afterwards understood, were glad to hear, and would like to hear again.

At another place called Melholt, about twelve miles north of Hals, I preached to a large and attentive assembly. After the meeting, I was asked to visit a poor dying woman. I did so. Spoke to her about the Lord Jesus—that He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost—read a portion of scripture, and kneeled down and prayed. Death seemed to be playing on her lips. She was scarcely able to speak. Several women came in while I was there; and these, together with the husband and the children of the dying woman, were deeply moved, and some of them wept, while I read and prayed. The pastor of the church in and about Hals, a really good and kind-hearted man, was with me both at this and several other places.

Lord's Day, 11th of October. I preached to a large assembly at Brusholt, about fifteen miles north-west of Hals; after which I baptized a young man, and then we sat down to the Lord's table. From thence I went further to the north; visited Sœby, where some of our brethren had endeavoured to get the town hall for me to preach in, but they did not succeed. From thence I went to Frederickshavn—preached several times there and in the neighbourhood. Went then to Hjörring, and down the west coast back to Aalborg, preaching every day at various places.

I should have visited several places about Aalborg, and attended a monthly meeting about ten miles south of it; but when I arrived at it, I found letters there informing me that my wife was taken seriously ill, and I had, therefore, to hasten home.

This journey took me thirty-nine days, and in that time I visited thirty-two different places, and preached in twenty-nine. How many miles I travelled I have not yet calculated exactly, but I do not think they were under 500 English miles. The weather was severe most of the time, and I had to walk sometimes many miles. Missionary labours here are connected with great privations and many severe hardships. I was told that nearly all the young brethren who commenced but a few years ago, and received partial support from the churches, were broken down already. I have great reason to thank God for having so graciously supported me and kept up in some measure my health and strength.

Not a few of the brethren in the north have left for America, and many more intend leaving in the Spring, if they can. They hope to make a better living in America than here—and I doubt not they will. The churches in the north make progress, and the Lord appears to bless them, but the emigration again reduces their numbers.

Your's in Christ,

A. P. FÖRSTER.

Mindstrup, Mark,
November 6th, 1863.

PRESENTATION AT LITTLE LEIGH.

On Thursday evening, the 22nd, the members of the Baptist church, at Little Leigh, met in the school-room adjoining the chapel. After partaking of tea, given by a few of the ladies connected with the church, a public meeting was held, over which Mr. Worrall presided. The object of the meeting was to present Mr. Smith, the highly-respected pastor of the church, with a testimonial of regard, as, after a more than 30 years' pastorage, he is beloved by every one who knows him. The gift consisted of a pair of gold spectacles, in a beautifully inlaid pearl case. A valuable article of wearing apparel accompanied the useful glasses; and short appropriate addresses were delivered by Messrs. Swinton, Barber, Rigby, Smith, and Harvey. A most harmonious and pleasant evening was spent.—*Warrington Guardian.*

ELLAND UPPER EDGE, NEAR RASTRICK, YORKSHIRE.

About two years ago, several persons connected with the churches at Salendine Nook and Blackley, took a "large upper room" in this place for religious worship. God has graciously blessed the effort; and on Monday, October the 19th,

1863, a particular Baptist church, on strict communion principles was formed. At two p.m. Mr. J. Hirst, of Blackley, described the nature of a Gospel church. After which letters of request and dismissal were read by Messrs. D. Crumpton, of Salendine Nook, and J. Hirst; and the Confession of Faith and Practice, and the Church Covenant, were read by Mr. H. Watts, of Golcar, and publicly assented to, and adopted by the persons about to be united in church fellowship. Mr. D. Crumpton then gave them an affectionate address, and also the right hand of fellowship, and formed the church, and earnestly supplicated the Divine blessing on the union. Mr. J. Hirst then set apart three brethren, chosen to the office of deacon, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered, each of the above-mentioned ministers taking part in the service. The friends then adjourned to the schoolroom in the village, and partook of tea. A public meeting was held in the said schoolrooms, at six p.m., the usual place of meeting being far too small to accommodate the numbers assembled. Mr. Crumpton presided. Mr. Watts gave a very suitable address on "The Duties of Church Members one to another." Mr. J. Hanson, of Huddersfield, spoke on "The Duties of the Church to the World:" and addresses of encouragement were given to the newly-formed church, by the chairman, and Mr. Hirst. After the passing of the usual resolutions of thanks, &c., the Doxology was sung. The chairman pronounced the benediction, and these interesting services were brought to a close.

PULTENEYTOWN, WICK.

This church has been much blessed during the year, twenty-two persons having been received by baptism, and added to the number. Their new chapel is also progressing, and the friends are much encouraged by the cheerful prospects before them.

MILE END GATE, LONDON.

An effort has been made for some time past by Mr. C. Gordelier, to establish a Strict Baptist Church, and recently a meeting was held to receive a statement of the progress made. Brethren Dickerson, Cracknell, Woodward, and others, attended and delivered addresses. The Church is not yet formed, but a Sunday School of about eighty children has been collected, and a "Bible Woman" appointed for the immediate district. There are obstacles connected with the effort, but faith, prayer, and perseverence, will finally overcome them all.

NORTH MALVERN.

A Strict Communion Baptist Church has, recently, been formed in this well-known and much frequented place. The worship is conducted for the present in a room, and who among us should "despise the day of small things?" Several of our largest churches had quite as primitive a beginning; and we earnestly hope that Baptists who visit Malvern will find out their own brethren—encourage them in their humility—and not wander away after some modern "Babylonish garment, and the wedge of gold."

HAVERSTOCK HILL, LONDON.

A large and most encouraging meeting was recently held here, to celebrate the second anniversary of the commencement of the strict

Baptist cause in this increasing locality. Brethren Dowdall, (the pastor,) J. Flory, J. Pells, C. Woollacott, M. Dunning, and W. Norton, attended, and addressed the assembly after tea, and their addresses were on some of the noblest themes contained in the glorious gospel. This infant interest has been blessed of God. Seven had been baptized during the past year, one of whom was a Russian, who is now actively engaged in his own country, in disseminating the principles of the Primitive Church of God. May this cause continue to grow. A chapel is very much needed, and in due time we hope to report that a good one has been raised.

RECOGNITION SERVICE.

On Thursday, December 3rd, 1863, a very interesting service was held in the Baptist chapel, Cullingworth, when A. Spencer was recognised as the pastor of the church in that place. Addresses were delivered on the occasion by two of the deacons, Mr. Binns, and Mr. Green; also, by A. Spencer, and brethren W. E. Goodman, of Keighley; H. Dowson, of Bradford; and A. Ashworth, of Bramley. Mr. J. Briggs occupied the chair. The addresses were of a very practical character. The attendance, considering the stormy weather, was good. A collection on behalf of the Baptist Mission was made at the close.

THE HUMAN RACE.

"It has been calculated," says the *Presse*, "that the human race now comprises in round numbers 1,000,000,000 of persons, speaking 3,064 languages, and professing 1,100 forms of religion. The average duration of human life is estimated at thirty-three years and six months. A quarter of the children born die before their seventh year, and one-half before their 17th. Out of the 1,000,000,000 persons living, 33,000,000 die each year, consequently one every second. These 33,000,000 deaths are counterbalanced by 41,500,000 births, the excess being the annual increase of the human race. It has been remarked that births and deaths are more frequent in the night than during the day. Calculating one marriage for every 120 persons of both sexes, and of all ages, 83,300,000 are celebrated annually."

RECEIPTS OF THIRTY RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES, FOR THE YEAR 1863,

As reported at their Annual Meetings in London—

	£
British and Foreign Bible Society (including sales)	158,750
Church Missionary Society	151,218
Wesleyan Missionary Society	141,638
Religious Tract Society (including sales)	95,302
Society for Propagating the Gospel	93,326
London Missionary Society	81,924
Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics	42,724
Church Pastoral Aid Society	41,692
London City Mission	36,761
For Promoting Christianity among the Jews	32,534
Colonial and Continental Church Society	29,771
Baptist Missionary Society	27,189
Additional Curates Society	25,009
British & Foreign School Society	16,205
Primitive Methodist Missions	11,891
Wesleyan Home Missions, about	11,600
Church of England Scripture Readers' Association	10,285
Incorporated Church Building Society	9,486
British Army Scripture Readers' Society	9,468
Congregational Home Missionary Society	9,061
United Methodist FreeChurches Missions	7,377
For Propagation of Gospel among the Jews	6,698
Missions to Seamen	6,154